

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented software application framework comprising:

a virtual object space providing access to a plurality of objects, each object having a set of functionality and being identifiable by a unique identifier provided by the virtual object space, and providing generic object functionality for the plurality of objects including an associations and transactions functionality for relating the plurality of objects and interaction between the plurality of objects, a distribution functionality for locking, flushing, and copying of the virtual object space, and a persistency functionality for maintaining persistency of the plurality of objects; and

a visualization framework for visualizing the plurality of objects independently of an application implementing the object, each object being visualized using the object's unique identifier and according to the object's corresponding set of functionality.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented framework of claim 1, further comprising:

framework services providing common event handling of the plurality of objects.

5. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented ~~software-implemented~~ object browser computer framework comprising:

a virtual object space providing access to a plurality of objects, each object being identifiable by a unique identifier, and providing generic object functionality for the plurality of objects including an associations and transactions functionality for relating the plurality of objects and interaction between the plurality of objects, a distribution functionality for locking, flushing, and copying of the virtual object space, and a persistency functionality for maintaining persistency of the plurality of objects;

a user interface for receiving input from a user relating to a desired arrangement of one or more of the plurality of ~~software~~ objects; and

a visualization framework for visualizing objects according to the desired arrangement, each object being visualized using the object's unique identifier independently of an application implementing the object.

6. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented object browser framework of claim 5, wherein the user interface further includes allowing a user to browse the plurality of objects independent of one or more applications implementing the objects.

7. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented object browser framework of claim 5, wherein the desired arrangement is hierarchical.

8. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented object browser framework of claim 5, wherein the visualization framework includes an object viewer.

9. (Currently Amended) A method of facilitating software object browsing, the method comprising:

providing access to software objects through a virtual object space in which each software object has an associated set of functionality and is identifiable by a unique identifier, and providing generic object functionality for software objects including an associations and transactions functionality for relating the software objects and interaction between the software objects, a distribution functionality for locking, flushing, and copying of the virtual object space, and a persistency functionality for maintaining persistency of the software objects; and

visualizing objects independently of an application implementing the software objects [[object]], each object being visualized using the object's unique identifier and according to the object's corresponding set of functionality.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Canceled)

12. (Original) The method of claim 9, further comprising:

providing framework services providing common event handling of the software objects.

13. (New) The computer-implemented framework of claim 1, further comprising:

providing a portlet to access the generic object functionality to visualize the structure of the plurality of objects.

14. (New) The method of claim 9, further comprising:

providing a portlet to access the generic object functionality to visualize the structure of the software objects.